

Letters to the Editor

Earth Day excellent adventure

More than 150 local school children were treated to a day of wildlife and wetland activities when the Directorate of Environment and Safety hosted its ninth annual Earth Day celebration April 22. Garrison commander Col. Bob Devlin was joined by Huntsville Mayor Loretta Spencer to welcome students from Monte Sano Elementary and Priceville Elementary to Redstone's Path to Nature. The celebration included the presentation of the second annual environmental awards and a tree planting. Following the ceremony, the children rotated through a number of educational programs that focused on natural and cultural resources.

Among the presenters were representatives from the North Alabama Wildlife Rehabilitators who talked to the youngsters about handling injured wildlife. "It's great for us to talk to school groups about what to do with injured or abandoned animals, because it's the kids who usually find them," Michelle Novosel of NAWR said. As part of their presentation, NAWR brought several baby animals which they are currently raising. The students had the opportunity to pet and even hold baby opossums. NAWR also brought a baby raccoon and their latest addition, a 2-week-old coyote pup! NAWR raises and/or rehabilitates the animals until they are able to care for themselves and then releases them back into the wild.

In addition to ecological resources,

Earth Day also recognizes local cultural resources. The early inhabitants of this area lived by using what they found in their natural environment. Jeff Thomson of Alexander Archaeological Consultants brought his "tools" (stones and a section of deer antler) and demonstrated Native American tool and weapon making. Although tools and projectile points are known to be made from at least 80 different kinds of stone, the activity is usually known as flint knapping. Most of the projectile points (arrowheads and spear points) that have been found on the Arsenal were made of flint. He showed the children how small flakes are removed by pressure flaking with a piece of antler. This process was used to make scrapers, knives, drills and other tools.

Other highlights of the day included a visit from Daphne Moland, a ranger from Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge, a wetland tour, and an eco-scavenger hunt. Upon leaving, the students and teachers were presented with goody bags containing items donated by DES, DPW, SMDC and NASA. In keeping with the spirit of Earth Day, this year's bags included packets of flower seeds that when in bloom, will attract butterflies.

As one teacher put it, "what an excellent day"; and indeed it was.

Gabbie Ehinger
Directorate of Environment
and Safety

Fun day for military families

On Saturday, May 1 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Southerland Station owner Dick Metzger and the Redstone-Huntsville Chapter of the Association of U.S. Army hosted a Military Family Open House. Southerland Station is North Alabama's premier hobby shop and model train showplace, with specialty toys and unique handicraft items, and the area's largest selection of artist supplies. It has three art studios, several large birthday party rooms, slot-car race-tracks along with model railroads.

For this event, all military children enjoyed at no charge hands-on model trains and slot car operation, Moon Bounce, Rock-n-Bop, entertainment by clowns and magicians, balloons and games in the large indoor area. All attendees registered for door prizes, provided

by Mr. Metzger – plus 20 percent discount on all purchases by military families! All during these hours, food, popcorn, ice cream and soft drinks were provided – all free to military families (active military including mobilized National Guard and Reserve).

We had a large turnout during the day — small to large groups from start to past planned finish, with high interest by all attendees. Children thoroughly enjoyed the Moon Bounce and car/train model operations, while everyone participated in the magician and clown acts.

Our committee wishes to thank: Dick Metzger for hosting the event at his store and providing popcorn and door prizes; Buffalo Rock Company general manager

See **Families** on page 3

Grateful for your generosity

I would like to thank the Redstone community employees for their unselfish donation of leave which was donated to me during my surgery and recovery period. I would also like to thank you for your prayers offered up for me and my family.

I wish I could thank each and every one personally, but I know it's

impossible. In times of personal crisis, y'all have shown a love which I will never forget. I spent from Jan. 8 to March 16 in the hospital. For your generosity, I will be eternally grateful. Thank you again.

Danny Harbin
lead security
guard sergeant,
Provost Marshal
Office



Photo by Skip Vaughn
Danny Harbin

Taking account of debit card

Warning: If you buy gas with a debit card you best have an available balance of at least \$51 in your checking account or you may cause yourself to be overdrawn even though you do not buy \$51 worth of gas. This is something of which those of us who use that piece of convenient plastic need to be aware.

I was told by my bank that for a few hours, a purchase of \$22 for gas caused my available funds in my checking account to be \$51 less than my balance. I also was told that this is legal. Luckily I had enough in my account to cover all outstanding checks so my account balance wouldn't be less than \$51 if these payments were processed prior to the disbursement for the gasoline. If I didn't, my bank would have placed my account into overdrawn status and charged me fees as per their overdraft policy.

To better explain, the following example should help. The bank shows a balance of \$90. With an outstanding check of \$50, the balance is actually \$40. Gas is bought for \$22 against the \$40 balance. There should not be an overdraft.

Yet the gas station sends a request to reserve \$51 until it sends payment instructions for the \$22. At that point the bank's records show \$39 available for disbursement out of a \$90 balance (\$90-\$51 reserved). After the reserve request comes in but prior to the gas company receiving their \$22 payment, the bank processes the \$50 outstanding check. Because the available funds are only \$39, the bank pays the \$50 check and overdraws the account by \$11 then charges the account owner overdraft fees. Per the bank, this would have been my fate if my balance had not been enough.

I have no idea why this is happening, but since it is I'm going to be more careful of where I use my debit card in the future. I have enjoyed the convenience of just swiping a card to make payments instead of writing checks, but if it is going to cause me the problem as described above I have to wonder if that convenience is worth the hassle. How about you?

Name withheld by request

Motorcycle safety rules rerun

I am not certain as to whom I should direct my complaint, but I feel there needs to be a clarification of the rules and regulations regarding operation of a motorcycle on Redstone Arsenal. I do want to make it clear that I am not blaming the security guards who are just doing their job. I just feel that those of us who prefer two-wheeled transportation

are entitled to be alerted to those changes well enough in advance to comply with them. I have ridden my bike in most days for the past four years, rain or shine.

April 22 was the first time I was told that I needed to wear bright colored

See **Safety** on page 4

Redstone Rocket

Editorial office 876-1500 Editorial fax 955-9138 Retail Advertising 532-4539 Classified Advertising 532-4300 Fax 532-4349

The *Redstone Rocket* is published weekly on Wednesday. The publisher will receive editorial content for publication in The *Redstone Rocket* through the Public Affairs Office, Army Garrison-Redstone, Bldg. 5300 Room 5144, Redstone Arsenal AL 35898.

The civilian enterprise printer of the *Redstone Rocket* is *The Huntsville Times*, located at 2317 S. Memorial Parkway, Huntsville AL 35801.

The deadline for display and commercial classified is 5 p.m. Friday before Wednesday publication.

email: redstone-rocket@redstone.army.mil
Rocket articles are available online at the following:
https://publicaffairs2.redstone.army.mil:7443/pls/pao_o/pao_home

Rocket Staff

Public Affairs Officer: Al Schwartz

Editor: Skip Vaughn

Reporters: Sandy Riebeling

Kelley Lane

Kim Mason

Copy Editor: Scott Seeley

Advertising Sales: Aletha Pardue
Petie Sims

The *Redstone Rocket* is published in the interest of the personnel at Redstone Arsenal, by *The Huntsville Times* a private firm in no way connected with the Department of the Army. Opinions expressed by writers herein are their own and are not to be considered an expression by the Department of the Army. The appearance of advertisements in this publication, to include inserts and supplements, does not constitute an endorsement by the Department of the Army of the products or services advertised within this publication.

The *Redstone Rocket* is distributed free of cost to Army personnel at Redstone Arsenal, and

Research Park, Huntsville. Mailing rates off post for The *Rocket* are \$30 per year, tax included. We do not guarantee timely delivery. "Third class mail may receive deferred service. The Postal Service does not guarantee the delivery of third class mail within a specified time." (Article 630 of the Domestic Mail Manual) We do not send subscription renewal notices.

Everything advertised in this publication must be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, creed, sex or national origin of the purchaser, user or patron. A confirmed violation or rejection of this policy of equal opportunity by an advertiser will result in refusal to print advertising from that source.